"I think it would me most unfortunate for any of the States to relax laws by which safeguards have been thrown around labor. I feel that there is no necessity for such action and that it would lead to a slackening of the energy of the nation rather than to an increase of it, besides being very unfair to the laboring people themselves."—Woodrow Wilson.

# A Message
*for*
# LABOR SUNDAY
IN
# TIME OF WAR

## September 2nd, 1917

*Issued by*

The Commission on the Church and Social Service
of the Federal Council of the Churches
of Christ in America
105 EAST 22nd STREET NEW YORK CITY

"The Federal Council has declared that 'the Christian ideal of the State cannot be realized until the principles of democracy are applied to industry. Therefore must the churches support all measures that really make for industrial democracy.' "—From *The Churches of Christ in Time of War*, a publication of The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

# *Social Ideals of the Churches Applied to Labor Problems in Time of War*

**1. Equal rights and justice for all men in all walks of life.**

This means regardless of color and nationality, both in the North and in the South. The churches dare not stand for less than the pledge taken by every member of the American Federation of Labor, "I promise never to discriminate against a fellow-worker on account of creed, color or nationality." (See bottom page 8.)

**2. Protection of the family by the single standard of purity, uniform divorce laws, proper regulation of marriage, proper housing.**

The concentration of great numbers of men in industrial centers, separated from their families, with unusual working-hours, large wages and inadequate housing has caused conditions in sex and family relations for which we must both demand correction and aid in bringing it about.

**3. The fullest possible development of every child, especially by the provision of education and recreation.**

Women are entering industrial occupation in continuously increasing numbers. Many of them go of necessity. Often because of long hours and tiresome labor they neglect their homes and permit their children to "shift for themselves," and this when there is special need for the conservation and training of our childhood. (See bottom page 5.)

"To meet the depletion of war the vitality of the coming generation needs to be increased. We therefore urge the Churches to call the attention of the community to this need and to increase their cooperation with all child welfare agencies.—*The Churches of Christ in Time of War.*

**4. Abolition of child labor.**

High school boys should not be overworked on farms in the name of patriotism for little or no wages when farmers are profiting thereby. Such work, when properly regulated and paid for is to be commended.

The Christian men and women of this country should take an active interest in the 1,850,000 children between ten and fifteen years old working in street trades, messenger service, stores and commercial establishments, truck garden gangs, etc.; and in the enforcement of the new Federal Child Labor Law which is to

emancipate 150,000 children laboring in factories, mills, canneries and workshops.

**5. Such regulation of the conditions of toil for women as shall safeguard the physical and moral health of the community.**

Women are taking the places in industry which were formerly occupied by men. There is danger that in their over-zeal to serve their country they will set precedents in low wages which are not necessary and which will tend to be maintained when the war is ended. The American Federation of Labor and the Women's Trade Union League have both adopted the slogan "Equal pay for equal work."

There is also danger that on account of their inexperience and lack of organization, and because they are attempting to work at tasks and in places designed for men, they will be unable to maintain proper standards for safeguarding their physical and moral health as well as that of the community.

**6. Abatement and prevention of poverty.**

All speculation in the necessities of life must be stopped. Men must not be permitted to make gain out of the hunger of the poor and the necessities of the nation, when the people are making unprecedented sacrifices. The Federal Council made the following official statement on May 10, 1917: "The Churches should stimulate the community conscience to demand that all speculation in necessities of life be eliminated, that all attempts at hoarding foodstuffs be prevented. Government action to this end should be heartily supported."

In a time when war prices reign, those who are unable to earn wages—the dependents—will need more help than ever. But in this very hour of their special need contributions to funds upon which they have in the past depended are likely to be reduced or withdrawn in favor of more unusual appeals for mercy and help.

It is also time to prepare for the wave of poverty which will prevail among many peoples in many lands after the war. The church will have no more sacred missionary duty than to be ready to render the relief, and to remove the barriers and temptations that attend famine and poverty.

**7. Protection of the individual and society from the social, economic and moral waste of the liquor traffic.**

In the face of the need of food by the Allied nations and the probability of famine over wide areas in Europe, it has become

"The Council of National Defense takes this position, that the standards that have been established by law, by mutual agreement, or by custom should not be changed at this time; that where either the employer or the employee has been able under normal conditions to change the standards to their own liking, they should not take advantage of the present abnormal conditions to establish new standards."—Secretary of Labor W. B. Wilson.

imperative for the nation to stop the waste of grain and molasses used in the production of distilled liquors.

In addition to this economic waste, we call attention to the waste of life and labor in the workers engaged in the business.

"Workers in the liquor business lose an average of six years of life, making a total loss in each generation of 1,800,000 years for its 300,000 workers. This means a total loss in each generation of the complete working life—30 years each—of 60,000 men."—*Statement issued in "Conservation of Human Life Campaign" of the Federal Council.*

The Strengthen America Campaign which is being conducted by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America has for its slogan "If you believe that the traffic in alcohol does more harm than good—*help stop it.*"

**8. Conservation of health, *and***

**9. Protection of the worker from dangerous machinery, occupational diseases, injuries and mortality.**

"Three million people in the United States are ill at any one time; 30,000,000 wage earners each lose nine days annually—costing them $500,000,000 in wages—on account of illness; 30,000 are killed annually in industry and 300,000 are seriously injured." All this is in times of peace. Most of this is preventable. "Human life may be extended fifteen years in a single generation by applying the science of preventing diseases and accidents." In addition to the above loss in wages, the expenditures for doctors' fees, medicine and extra expenses due to illness total $500,000,000 more. Thus the total loss per year due to illness

"It is of great national concern that at the outset of the war this country shall maintain a scientific programme of legal protection for workers in the interests both of maximum production and human conservation. We must not permit over-zeal to lead to the weakening of our protective standards and hence to the breaking down of the health and productiveness of labor."—Secretary of the Navy J. Daniels.

"The experience of war time has only demonstrated the necessity—technical, economic and even physiological—of the laws enacted before the war. In our legislation secured in time of peace we shall find the conditions for a better and more intense production during the war."—M. Albert Thomas, French Minister of Munitions.

among wage-earners is approximately $1,000,000,000, or more money than is spent for all the philanthropic interests in the United States in a normal year.—*These estimates were made by the director of the Federal Council's Campaign for the Conservation of Human Life.*

The increased employment in the extra-hazardous industries of munition manufacture, the longer hours of work and the probable shortage of staple foods will tend to aggravate this situation during the war. The fact that many of the most fit physically shall have been removed will place these burdens on the less fit, and in this way will increase the necessity for these protections. (See bottom page 4.)

**10. The right of all men to the opportunity for self-maintenance, for safeguarding this right against encroachments of every kind, and for protection of workers from the hardships of enforced unemployment.**

The other nations at war already have instituted activities, educational equipment, for the prevention of enforced unemployment due to incapacities caused while in service. The wounded, crippled and broken in health will need special consideration as well as those others who certainly will be unemployed during the exigencies of the industrial readjustment which will follow the war. Periods of reconstruction usually have been attended by suffering second only to that of war. The preparation for this emergency is a call for magnificent Christian statesmanship.

"In England the war exemptions to the factory laws have not included a lowering of the age limits for factory work. And the exemptions to the school attendance laws permitted for agriculture and 'light employment' are now bitterly regretted by the general education authority which has sanctioned them."—Bulletin Childrea's Bureau, U. S. Department of Labor.

**11. Suitable provision for the old age of the workers and for those incapacitated by injury.**

To the army of workers for whom provision always must be made for their old age and for incapacity caused by injury, will be added a vast army of wrecked and broken men. We urge that an adequate and just pension system, worked out on a scientific basis, be provided for the latter army at least. Perhaps it could be worked out for both groups, especially since many who are engaged in the manufacture of munitions and equipment for war will hereafter augment the first army. Such a pension probably would be similar to the scheme which is now used as a basis for compensation in cases of injury in extra-hazardous employment.

**12. The principle of conciliation and arbitration in industrial disputes.**

The Federal Council has always urged upon employees and employers the consideration of the general public, which often suffers from their behavior in times of disagreement. In the present social crisis there is special reason for expediting the conciliation or arbitration of disputes. Strikes, lockouts and any tying-up of the social economic activities are a serious menace to our country, particularly during the war, and may produce inconceivable calamity to an innocent third party. Let first things be first and let a royal consecration to a suffering humanity burn up the desire (however much it may be justified) for selfish satisfactions.

**13. Release from employment one day in seven.**

"Long Hours, much overtime and especially Sunday labor, have a pernicious effect on health, particularly in heavy trades." —*Health of Munition Workers Committee, Great Britain.*

A representative of the Federal Council has appeared twice recently before the New York State Industrial Commission against employers of labor who, taking advantage of the situation created by war, tried to lengthen the hours of labor and compel their employees to work a seven-day week. In each of these cases, after due consideration, the requests of the employers were denied by the Industrial Commission.

**14. Gradual and reasonable reduction of hours of labor to the lowest practicable point, and for that degree of leisure for all which is a condition of the highest human life.**

Representatives of the Federal Council appeared at a public hearing before Governor Whitman of New York after the Legis-

lature of that State had passed the "Brown" bill which, under the guise of patriotism, threatened the industrial standards of the State. After the hearing, the Governor vetoed the bill and made the statement which appears at the top of page 8 of this folder.

Pastors can cooperate with the Federal Council and the denominational social service commissions or by calling to their attention any danger to breaking of industrial standards.

### 15. A living wage as a minimum in every industry and the highest wage that each industry can afford.

(See statement made by Secretary of Labor W. B. Wilson on page 4.)

"The Council of National Defense recognized the fact that the standard of living is an indefinite standard, difficult to determine, that it is almost entirely dependent upon the rate of wages retaining the same purchasing power. . . . . Because of the indefiniteness of the standard of living and the maintaining of it at the same point, the Council recognizes the fact that from time to time disputes will arise as to what is necessary to maintain that standard of living, but it feels that before any stoppage of work takes place in any industry in which the Government is interested for the maintenance of safety that the established agencies of the Government should be given an opportunity to use their good offices to bring about an adjustment of the impending dispute."—*Secretary Wilson.*

### 16. The most equitable division of the product of industry that can ultimately be devised.

The distribution of the cost of the war is so closely related to problems of the equitable division of the product of industry as to make the following statements of the Federal Council very significant:

"The burden of the cost of the war must be evenly distributed. The principle of universal service has been applied to life in the raising of troops. It should therefore be applied in the same manner to wealth and ability."—*From the Official Message of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, May 10, 1917.*

"If the nation picks the strength of its youth for the firing line, justice demands that it select its financial strength and economic ability to bear the financial costs of the war."—*The Church in Time of War.*

"If we are to attain the greatest measure of efficiency in our preparation and in our prosecution of the war we must not permit our people who are engaged in industrial pursuits to become apprehensive that the standards erected for their protection will be set aside, and we must not permit our industrial population to have cause to feel that the war's burdens and sacrifices may rest most heavily upon the shoulders of those least able to bear them."—Governor Whitman, of New York State.

## *Suggestions*

1. Observe Labor Sunday on September 2nd or as soon thereafter as possible.

2. Keep in touch with your denominational social service commission and with that of the Federal Council of Churches (105 East 22nd Street, New York City). Tell them of your needs and of your local problems. Send them suggestions, criticisms, and reports of successful activities. Ask for advice, suggestions, literature, etc.

3. Obtain copies of the following publications of the Federal Council (single copies free), and distribute at least some of them by the hundred.

| | Per 100 |
|---|---|
| **Social Ideals of the Church** (paper) | $0.50 |
| **Social Ideals of the Church** (card) | 1.00 |
| **The Church's Appeal in Behalf of Labor** | 1.00 |
| **The Church and Modern Industry** | 1.75 |
| **A Labor Message in Time of War** (a tricolor reprint of this Message for Labor Sunday in Time of War) | 2.00 |
| **Christian Duties in Conserving the Social, Moral, and Spiritual Forces of the Nation in Time of War** | 5.00 |

4. Obtain (upon application) the following publications of the United States Department of Labor, Washington, D. C.:

Bull. 221—Hours, Fatigue, and Health in British Munition Factories.

Bull. 222—Welfare Work in Munition Factories.

Monthly Review of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (especially May, 1917, and thereafter).

---

*This leaflet was prepared for the Commission on the Church and Social Service of the Federal Council of Churches, by Herbert N. Shenton, Instructor in Sociology at Columbia University.*

*WORTH M. TIPPY, Executive Secretary.*

[*Additional copies of the publication, $2.00 per hundred*]

"If we are to advance democracy throughout the earth we must first exemplify it in the nation. It must not be denied either in industry or government."—Official Message of the Federal Council to the Churches of Christ in America.

"Interpret to us in loving living acts the religion of Jesus Christ."—From a banner carried in the parade of 10,000 negroes in New York City in their silent protest against the East St. Louis massacre.